

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2004 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 666 (Senator Colburn)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Secretary of Natural Resources - Consideration of Information and Research**

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This bill requires the Secretary of Natural Resources, in the formulation of department-initiated legislation or regulatory proposals, to consider the best scientific, economic, and biological information and research available.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The bill would not materially affect State operations or finances. In general, it codifies current practice.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** The Secretary of Natural Resources is responsible for the development of coordinated policies regarding the use of the State's natural resources. The Secretary is required to study and evaluate any plan, program, or activity and recommend any legislative, budgetary, or administrative changes to provide more effective administration, clarify responsibilities, terminate obsolete programs, establish desirable programs, or alter or amend programs to meet changed or changing conditions.

**Background:** Virginia law includes provisions requiring the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) to consider the economic impact of proposed regulatory and legislative changes in the preparation of the blue crab fishery management plan. Further,

Virginia law requires VMRC to base fishery management plans and conservation and management measures on the best scientific, economic, biological, and sociological information available. This bill is, in part, based on those provisions of Virginia law.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Legislation introduced in 2003 (SB 474) would have required the Secretary of Natural Resources to consider the best scientific, economic, biological, and sociological information available in the formulation of a legislative or regulatory proposal, a budgetary or administrative decision, or specified policies. The bill received an unfavorable report by the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Natural Resources, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 9, 2004  
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